

13 September 2004

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## Policy Priorities

1. The Safer Communities Board has inherited a wide remit from its three predecessor bodies: the Fire Service and Public Protection Executive and the Community Safety Panel. Members will want to discuss the overview of the work and agree the key priorities for the future work of the Board.
2. To assist members in understanding this remit, it is suggested that the following broad objectives be adopted:

**It will be the aim of the Board to seek to ensure the safety of our communities by**

- **developing, promoting and supporting the role of local government and fire authorities in their work on :**
  - Preventing and reducing the impact and incidence of
    - crime
    - anti social behaviour
    - fire
    - other emergencies
  - Licensing and regulatory activities (in co-operation with LACORS)
  - Emergency planning

It will be a priority to ensure that authorities receive adequate levels of funding for their work, and the right level of support from the government and other agencies, in particular the IDeA, with which it is hoped the Board will work in close partnership.

- **Actively promoting the role and profile of local government and fire and rescue authorities in carrying out this work.**

This is intended to provide a simple but comprehensive framework within which the detailed work of the Board can be developed.

### Managing delivery of this agenda

3. Work within this framework has been undertaken through a combination of corporate/business plan projects and policy work.

### Corporate/business plan projects

4. The Board has inherited the following corporate projects
  - A new deal for emergency planning (Public Protection Executive)
  - Ahead of the Game – Prostitution (Public Protection Executive)
  - Domestic Violence (Community Safety Panel)
  - Fire Modernisation (Fire Service Executive)
  - Working with the Correctional System (Social Inclusion Executive)

Further information on these projects is given in **Appendix 1**.

5. The mix of corporate project and relationship management work has varied between successor bodies. In particular virtually all Fire Service Executive work has been included in the fire modernisation corporate project. Member oversight of these projects has also varied. For the future it is proposed that, normally, projects will be overseen by a member task group. Nominations for these, where they have been received have been set out in the attached table. Members are invited to endorse this proposal and confirm task group membership, or where they feel it appropriate to agree alternative arrangements.

### **New and modified projects**

#### **Safer and Stronger Communities Shared Priority**

6. The Community Safety Panel also had oversight of this project which is one of five set up to work specifically on issues identified by the government and LGA as shared priorities, their primary focus being the development of demonstration projects aimed at finding innovative ways of taking these issues forward. The Safer and Stronger Communities project work has been directed towards Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. In conjunction with the reform of the members' structure, it is now being recommended that the elements of all shared priority projects relating to demonstration projects be incorporated into a single project for which the LGA Executive will take responsibility. This transfer is likely to leave a number of key issues for which the Board may wish to take responsibility through its policy activities. If the Board agrees this course of action a further report on the transfer of the Safer and Stronger Communities Project will be given at the next meeting of the Board.

#### **Police Reform**

7. The LGA Executive at its meeting on 17 July considered the implications for the Government's proposals for police reform and agreed that further consideration be given to the establishment of a task group to take forward its implications for local government. This work is currently underway and a report of the outcome will be given at the next meeting of the Board.

#### **Other key policy priorities**

8. Other key policy priorities have been taken forward through relationship management work. In all cases it has been the objective to ensure that local government interests are fully represented in the development of policy and that authorities receive the right level of support for their work, including adequate funding. Work inherited from the Public Protection Executive has been carried out in close collaboration with the Local Authority Coordinator of Regulatory Services (LACORS) with which the LGA has a service level agreement. Work led by LACORS is specifically identified in the schedule.

9. In determining which of these issues it might wish to take forward, and in what way, members may wish to consider allocating work according to the following categories:
- a. Work for which the Board would take direct responsibility.
  - b. Work which would be delegated to a lead member or members. It would be conducted within an agreed policy framework with reporting back to the Board at agreed intervals. It is suggested that one or a number of leading members could be drawn either from amongst Board members or from the wider LGA membership.
  - c. Work which would be delegated to officers to undertake within an agreed policy framework with reporting back arrangements at agreed intervals.
10. The following is a schedule of relationship management work for which predecessor bodies have been responsible.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>LACORS/IDeA involvement</b>	<b>Lead Government Department</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
Arson reduction Fire Safety Executive	Developing a range of measures to reduce the incidence of arson, working particularly with young people. Linked to work with CDRPs		ODPM	Incorporate into CDRP support work
Fire Safety Enforcement (Fire Service Executive)	Support activities connected with the replacement of fire certification in public buildings by system of risk assessment.		ODPM	Lead member issue. Combine with building regulations
A coherent approach to improving regulatory services	Work with government in improving the coordination and profile of regulatory services. Linked to the Hampton Review of regulatory inspection and enforcement A paper giving more detail of this work is a separate item on the agenda for this meeting.	LACORS	Treasury/almost all departments	Board lead

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>LACORS/IDeA involvement</b>	<b>Lead Government Department</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
LACORS lead	Animal Health and welfare, civil registration, food safety, health and safety at work, trading standards, entertainments licensing, fireworks legislation, gambling licensing.	LACORS	DEFRA,DCA, DoH, DWP, DTI, DCMS	Lead member/s LACORS Board
Licensing issues LGA lead	Licensing of massage and special treatment parlours, taxi licensing, charity collections		DoH, DTI, DFT, Home Office	Officer lead
Pollution control	Air quality, contaminated land, pollution prevention control, statutory nuisance (noise)		DEFRA	Lead member/s
Legal issues	Coroners courts, magistrates courts rule changes, burial law		DCA, Home Office	Office lead
Building control	Representing local government in relation to key building control issues, and working to ensure that the appropriate level of support for this work is available.		ODPM	Lead member with fire safety legislation
Sanitation issues	Pest control, infectious disease, burial law		DEFRA, DH	Office lead

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>LACORS/IDeA involvement</b>	<b>Lead Government Department</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships	Work to improve the performance of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. The extent of this work will depend on how the Safer and Stronger Communities Shared Priority project goes forward. Will cover at least Section 17 guidance and mergers with Drug Action Teams.	IDeA	Home Office	Board lead
Crime Reduction Strategies	Providing representation for local government on a number of key government bodies set up to develop initiatives designed to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.		Home Office	Board lead

### **Social inclusion and equalities issues**

11. The terms of reference of the Board require that it allocated responsibility for social inclusion and equalities issues within its areas of responsibility to one of its members. Once members have made final decisions on the range of issues to be taken forward, project plans will be developed for each including an assessment of the social inclusion and equalities implications. It is proposed that the appointment of a lead member for these issues be made as part of the comprehensive agreement on future work priorities that will be taken at the next meeting.

### **Advisers**

12. The Board's predecessor bodies each had a team of specialist advisers who provided valuable support in detailed areas of activity. It is proposed that advisers continue to be appointed, and where possible are assigned to specific activities so that their work is given focus and direction.

### **Commercial activity**

13. The LGA's commercial strategy delivers a number of objectives, in addition to income which is used by the Association to fund better services for members. The past success of the LGA's conference and events activity has been judged on the basis of a "balanced

scorecard” using twelve different criteria. At its simplest, this ensures that commercial considerations (i.e. financial surpluses) are not the only way to judge success– delivery of the LGA’s policy objectives, the type of speakers and delegates attracted, the fit between the event and the projects, etc are also to be taken into account.

14. Events under the Safer Communities Board’s remit earned in excess of £300k last year in surplus, from twenty one day events and two residential programmes. So far this financial year, three one day events are in advanced planning stages. There is also one residential programme (fire) currently being worked up.

15. The planning of further events will form an integral part of specific projects and board activities. Initial indications are that the following are issues on which successful events could be held:

- Getting Serious – Alcohol Fuelled Crime [jointly with the Supporting People Board]
- Anti-social behaviour – Tackling the Hotspots
- Domestic Violence
- Emergency Planning – implementing the new legislation
- Building Regulations and sustainability
- Licensing and community safety
- Or other topics as the Board sees fit to consider
  
- A new residential event – Safer Communities Residential – to be held in 2005. This should match the agenda of the Board. This will have to take place in the next financial year, as there is insufficient planning time for this to be completed within this financial year.

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